



BASIC INFORMATION

DESCRIPTION

Infection or inflammation of the vagina or vulva before a young girl reaches puberty. Affects female infants and children.

FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Redness, pain and itching around the genital area.
- Vaginal discharge, which may or may not have an odor.
- Pain with urination.
- Bleeding from the affected area (sometimes).

CAUSES

- Infections caused by bacteria, parasites (including pinworms), yeast-like fungi, or viruses.
- Allergies to synthetic fabrics, soap or other items in contact with the genitals.
- Scratches, abrasions or genital injury from insertion of foreign bodies in the vagina by the child or a playmate.
- Genital injury from sexual abuse.
- Irritation from sources such as bubble bath or bath additives.

RISK INCREASES WITH

- Diabetes mellitus.
- Infrequent bathing or unsanitary living conditions.
- Co-existing pharyngitis or other infection.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

- Teach the child to wipe from the vagina toward the anus after bowel movements.
- Don't let the child sit around in wet clothing, especially a wet bathing suit.
- Don't let the child use dyed or perfumed toilet tissue, scented soap or bubble baths.
- Provide the child with cotton underpants or nylon underpants with a cotton crotch.
- Teach your child to resist and report any attempted sexual contact by an older person.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Usually curable in 10 days with treatment.

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

Adhesions (fibrous tissue within the body that joins normally unconnected parts; they are usually scar tissue formed after inflammation).



TREATMENT

GENERAL MEASURES

- Diagnostic tests may include laboratory blood studies and culture of the vaginal discharge and examination of the vagina.
- Removal of any foreign object in the vagina.
- Discontinuance of the source of any irritation or allergy, such as soap or bubble bath
- If urinating causes burning, the child may urinate while bathing or urinate through a toilet-paper roll or plastic cup with the end cut out or a cup of warm water poured over the genital area while urinating. This prevents urine from stinging inflamed skin.

MEDICATIONS

- Medication appropriate for the infection, including antibiotics, antifungal or antiparasitic drugs.
- Topical ointments to relieve pain and itching.

ACTIVITY

No restrictions.

DIET

No special diet.



NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

- Your child has symptoms of vulvovaginitis.
- You suspect your child has been sexually abused.
- Symptoms don't improve in 7 to 10 days or symptoms worsen, despite treatment.
- Unusual vaginal bleeding or swelling develops.